

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN**

Re: *Improving Wireless Emergency Alerts and Community-Initiated Alerting*, PS Docket No. 15-91;
Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System, PS
Docket No. 15-94

It is in our darkest hours that we, unfortunately, are most reminded of the importance of robust, reliable connectivity. In the wake of the recent bombing in Manhattan, the Wireless Emergency Alert system enlisted millions of New Yorkers to be the eyes and ears of law enforcement. Thanks in large part to this valuable tool, the suspect was swiftly captured. This first of its kind message is a poignant example of the innovative ways WEA can be utilized to help save lives.

Today's item enhances WEA's effectiveness and utility by adopting rules to improve message content, delivery, and testing. Notably, we increase the maximum Alert Message length from 90 to 360 characters for 4G-LTE and future networks to enable alert originators to more clearly communicate with their communities.

We also require participating mobile providers to support embedded references in all alerts as contemplated in the underlying NPRM. Indeed, as the recent incidents in New York and New Jersey underscore, providing emergency managers with the ability to direct their communities to a comprehensive and authoritative resource in an emergency situation is a must.

Equally important, is ensuring that alerts are delivered to the intended audience. To support this goal, we require participating wireless providers to narrow their geo-targeting of Alert Messages to locations that best approximate the areas specified by the alert originator, and we affirm our commitment to ensuring that WEA Alert Messages are only received by those for whom they are relevant. The Further Notice tees up a series of questions and technical considerations that must be resolved before we get there, but we are unwavering in our goal to reduce over-alerting and improve WEA's effectiveness in that regard.

In addition, the Further Notice seeks comment on a number of important issues, such as expanding the language capabilities of WEA beyond English and Spanish, providing the public more choice in the types of alerts received, as well as the manner and timing of the alerts, and ensuring that enhanced WEA capabilities are considered and factored into the 5G development process.

The importance of this life-saving tool cannot be overstated, and I encourage all stakeholders to continue to participate in the ongoing dialogue, as technological improvements are made to mobile networks. We have a lot to be proud of today, but more work remains, and time is of the essence.

How appropriate it is, that we are releasing this item during National Preparedness Month. It gives us another opportunity to thank the nation's emergency professionals for all they do to keep us safe, including those who came to the rescue during yesterday's tragic shooting incident at Townville Elementary in South Carolina. I would also like to thank Admiral David Simpson for his leadership and the staff of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, for their dedication and tireless efforts on behalf of the American people.